

**The Concept of “People” in the Novel *The Nomads: Despair*
by I. Yessenberlin / *O conceito de “povo” no romance The Nomads:
Despair [Os nômades: desespero] de I. Yessenberlin***

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the concept of “people” in Ilyas Yessenberlin’s historical novel *The Nomads: Despair*, the second book in his Nomads trilogy. Using a mixture of literary analysis, historical interpretation and psychological theory, the study examines the development of Kazakh national identity as depicted in the text. The novel depicts the transformation of the nomads from fragmented tribes into a unified nation, emphasizing unity over clan divisions in the face of external threats. The analysis highlights the importance of enduring hardship, preserving family ties, and the influence of Kazakh culture and folklore. The study reveals how shared trials shape collective identity and agency, offering new insights into Yessenberlin’s work and contributing to a broader understanding of nation-building in Kazakh literature.

KEYWORDS: Novel; Literary Concept; Kazakh People; Psychological Portrait; Historical Features

RESUMO

Este artigo explora o conceito de “povo” no romance histórico de Ilyas Yessenberlin, The Nomads: Despair [Os nômades: desespero], o segundo livro da trilogia Nomads. Usando uma mistura de análise literária, interpretação histórica e teoria psicológica, o estudo examina o desenvolvimento da identidade nacional cazaque, conforme descrito no texto. O romance descreve a transformação dos nômades de tribos fragmentadas em uma nação unificada, enfatizando a unidade sobre as divisões de clãs diante de ameaças externas. A análise destaca a importância das dificuldades suportadas, da preservação da família e da influência da cultura e do folclore cazaque. O estudo revela como os julgamentos compartilhados moldam a identidade e a agência coletivas, oferecendo novos insights sobre o trabalho de Yessenberlin e contribuindo para uma compreensão mais ampla da construção da nação na literatura cazaque.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Romance; Conceito literário; Povo cazaque; Retrato psicológico; Traços históricos

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Introduction

Ilyas Yesenberlin (1915-1983) was a prominent Kazakh writer, known for his significant contributions to both Soviet and Kazakh literature. His literary career spans across various genres, starting with poetry and drama, followed by a shift to prose. The early works include social realist novels like *The Struggle* (1966), focusing on Kazakh engineers, and *Dangerous Crossing* (1967), which explores the establishment of Soviet power in Kazakhstan. His most celebrated works, however, are his historical novels, particularly *The Golden Horde* trilogy, and *The Nomads* trilogy, which examine the history and identity of the Kazakh people. The last became Yesenberlin's most famous work. This epic traces the formation of the Kazakh nation, detailing their struggles against the Dzungars, Chinese, and Russian empires. *The Nomads* provides an in-depth portrayal of the Kazakh people's development, identity, and the rise of key historical figures such as Khan Kene and Bukhar-zhyrau.

Literature, as part of the world's cultural heritage, represents the broadest and most ancient stratum and the transmission of thoughts and emotions through art (Bazaluk, 2019). All the historical milestones reflected in the wars, conquest of peoples, and conquest of territories have become known to modern researchers through previously written materials. As Aketina (2019, p. 15) aptly puts it, "historical literature serves as a bridge between past civilizations and present understanding." The historical novel has long been entrenched in the list of the most sought-after literary genres, given the authenticity of events, conditioned by its informative uniqueness and embellished details of true history. Often, the concept of the people becomes the focal point in literature, as Abenova (2019, p. 18) notes, "the people represent the core around which history itself is built." A special place both in Kazakh literature and in the niche of world novels and chronicles is occupied by the works of Ilyas Yessenberlin. Mukhtarova emphasizes, "Yessenberlin's work not only narrates the Kazakh past but revives its essence, giving voice to figures long forgotten by history." (2021, p. 1176).

The novel entitled *The Nomads*, written by this internationally renowned Kazakh writer, has become one of the most popular works in his writing career. It is this work that harmoniously combines the historical background of the entire Kazakh nation with a detailed story about the most significant heroic figures, on which the emphasis has been

placed. *The Nomads: Despair* is not just a historical novel but a novel-chronicle, and as Yessenberlin himself states (1978, p. 68), “history breathes through the pages, capturing both the grandeur and the suffering of an ancient people.” It is distinguished by greater consistency and a focus on the individual and his or her personality rather than events. As Ospanova (2019, p. 408) remarks, “the novel’s strength lies in its portrayal of the human spirit, a reflection of the Kazakh people’s perseverance through adversity.”

Often, as in the work presented, this focus is on the feelings of the protagonist, his or her experiences and thoughts. Through this approach, the author has been able to show all the events perceived by readers in the experience of studying world history as standard milestones, with greater emotional sensitivity. When a reader sees qualities close to his or her own in a character, he or she begins to empathise and sympathise more, separating the character from the convoluted plots of historical prose (Abdykadyrova et al., 2023). This contributes to a deeper analysis of the phenomenon of the people’s image itself and encourages a desire to find causal relationships, rather than just reading an interesting story. In Yessenberlin’s *The Nomads: Despair* the people are portrayed as a diverse community, each individual facing their own emotional challenges. For example, Khan Abulkhair leads the Kazakh people against the Dzungar invaders, showing both tactical brilliance and ruthless determination. Characters like Bukhar-zhyrau, the poet and prophet, and Kabambai-batyr, the legendary general, exhibit a mix of wisdom and warrior spirit. Khan Kerey’s leadership and Khan Janibek’s foundation of the Kazakh Khanate showcase not only their valor but also their internal conflicts in preserving their people. These figures reflect the complexity of human emotion, balancing strength with fear and doubt. This duality rejects the classical constructions of history, where the story is led by an idealised character, ready to save everyone (Ryaguzova, 2020). In this case, the novel-chronicle is as close to natural life as possible, in which there is a balance between lofty and earthly feelings. The psychological aspect of the novel became its distinctive feature and significantly changed the perception of wars, which occurred constantly and inevitably (Eltuzerova, 2020).

The novel *The Nomads: Despair* is a trilogy and provides a detailed description of the psychological portrait of the people. The commonality of the Kazakh people stands out as a distinct literary image. At first glance, in the part entitled “The Charmed Sword,” it lacks a face; it is like a grey and faceless mass. Further, by the end of the first part of

the novel, the people are transformed into a kind of charmed sword and acquire a recognisable face (Eskindirova and Alshinbaeva, 2021). The people develop an opinion of their own and actively learn to defend themselves at the climax, ready to fight for their own future and freedom. This change is reflected in lines like “At first, they wandered, disoriented, but soon the people stood tall, wielding the enchanted blade, prepared to fight for freedom” (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 74). This highlights their shift from passivity to active resistance. The mainstay of the entire novel is the people, described through fate, everyday life, and historical features (Beishenalieva, 2020). Thus, the concept of the people becomes the basis of all the author’s reasoning and presents the history of the Kazakh nation in terms of strong personalities. The concept of the people has become the main object of analysis in the study, as this category of historical change that can be used to conclude why wars are repeated in one way or another and how the Kazakh nomads differ from any other peoples of the world. The historical, psychological and personal aspects help to understand the differences between the various peoples and to understand the reasons for their resilience and the specificities of the era in question, its influence and inalienability within the given scenario.

The aim of the study is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the literary concept in the novel *The Nomads: Despair* and to consider the most important and epochal moments of change in the community of Kazakhs during the nomadic conquest, which is important for understanding their mentality. The nomadic conquest, also known as the Dzungar invasion, occurred in the early 18th century when the Dzungar Khanate launched attacks on Kazakh territories. The conflict involved the Kazakhs defending their lands against the Dzungars, and later, the Russians also became involved.

Materials and Methods

A thorough examination of the author’s biography, along with the distinctive features of his creative style and literary techniques, has led to significant conclusions about the Kazakh people. The novel *The Nomads: Despair* contains a highly ambiguous and varied description of a people who have travelled a long and arduous road of development. In *The Nomads: Despair*, ambiguous character descriptions often reflect the inner conflicts of the people and their leaders. For instance, Khan Abulkhair is

depicted as both a wise and ruthless leader: “He showed no mercy in battle, yet within him stirred the fears of a ruler whose nation teetered on the edge of collapse” (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 72). The language contrasts his tactical genius with his internal doubts, creating an image of complexity. Similarly, Bukhar-zhyrau is described as both prophetic and emotionally conflicted: “His sharp tongue spoke truths the people feared, yet in his eyes lay the sorrow of foreseeing their suffering” (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 84). This balance of wisdom and melancholy adds layers to his character, showing the multifaceted nature of those guiding the Kazakh people.

The author has also presented the importance of heroic figures from a very different perspective (Ryaguzova, 2020). Another undoubtedly significant method was the historical interpretation, conditioned by its specificity. Since a people is a community directly changeable but still subject to time, history becomes a guide for the acquisition of new skills and goal-setting by the people (Pap, 2021).

The historical interpretation in this content plays an important role, as it only considers the era and its impact on the identity of the person who is a part of the national community. The way many historical factors are woven into the novel and presented by the author in the most appropriate way allows drawing parallels between generations, which is characteristic of a novel-chronicle. This is evident in the reflection on the Kazakh people’s fate: “We ride across the steppe, rejoicing in its vastness, but another life is already squeezing us from all sides. We will disappear unless we learn to build and plant...” (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 89). This quote emphasizes the tension between tradition and modernity, showing how historical changes shape the nation’s future.

The psychological method is the author’s vision in this study. The way the author turns the situation depends not only on the literacy of its interpretation, but also on the stability of the reader’s thinking. When the author of a novel or any other literary work skilfully displays both positive and negative characteristics, the reader develops a connection with the characters. Such an aspect is most important for an author, even one who is writing about existing people in a particular era. Consideration of the characters’ temperaments, propensities and weaknesses makes the novel realistic and evokes much more empathy on the part of readers (Zhakipova, 2021).

Results

The most competent analysis requires the use of literary concepts, which contribute to a deeper understanding of this historical and cultural unit called people. Fictional concepts expressing individual worldviews were first identified in the twentieth century, highlighting the importance of writers in shaping the conceptual framework (Aketina, 2019). Many scholars argue that poets within linguistic and cultural environments play a crucial role in this process. The national conceptual sphere includes numerous well-known expressions from classical works, with many titles evolving into symbolic representations. In *The Nomads: Despair*, psychological aspects of the people are depicted through their resilience and transformation. For example, the nomads' journey of adaptation is illustrated by the line: "They ride across the steppe, rejoicing in its vastness, but another life is already squeezing us from all sides" (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 91). This reflects the internal struggle of the people as they face external pressures, showing a complex psychological portrait of a group at a crossroads between tradition and modernity. This emotional depth reveals their evolving consciousness. If the first part of the novel lacks a clear identity and is depicted as an unremarkable grey mass, by the end of *The Nomads: Despair*, the people are transformed into what the author calls a "diamond or charmed sword." As Ospanova (2019) notes, this transformation signifies the awakening of national consciousness and the sharpening of the people's resilience, mirroring their historical struggle to assert their identity against external pressures. The people are successfully acquiring a face, their own opinions, and learning to defend themselves. The second part of the novel, entitled *The Nomads: Despair*, shows the people fighting bravely and without hesitation for their future. The main concept in "The Nomads" trilogy is the direct culmination in the development of precisely such a community as the people.

In the novel by I. Yessenberlin, the people are represented directly by the nomads. They represent a unique stratum of the folk system, which is reflected in the novel. The pages of the novel describe their fate, way of life, history, the formation of the people's national identity, the change in their mentality, thinking, mindset and their worldview. In the first book of the trilogy, entitled *The Charmed Sword*, the people are like a diamond sword, strong and sharp, as if they are one, incorporating the best of the true heroes. The

nation has transformed from a simple and unsophisticated mass of people into a desperate and willing to build its new history on the ruins of war, to create a community that is perfectly capable of defending itself. The Genghizides, who are given a place in the novel by the Kazakh writer, used the people only as cannon fodder, calling them a mass without a face, or the even more unpleasant word “rabble.” In this connotation, the words thrown in this way only fuelled the nomads’ desire for independence and hatred towards their supposed conquerors.

The second novel in the trilogy *Despair* finds the people in a pit of shackles and doubts from which they could only get out on their own, without relying on support from outside. Despite all the customary traditions and beliefs of that time, without also looking at all the customs, people were no longer expecting help from the Genghizides, which is clear in the narrative. The nomads took their fate into their own hands, going into battle without a backward glance, defending themselves and their children, relatives and friends. While in the first part of the novel, only certain individuals at the top of power, such as Zhanybek and Asan Kaigy, thought about the future, in *Despair* the people themselves, led by their batyrs, thought about the future (Mukhtarova, 2019). Whereas previously the batyrs were known only to their own clan, now the batyrs are known in the folk community. They were no longer divided into clans and tribes, into nobles and commoners. Previously, they did not even interfere in each other’s affairs, as described by I. Yessenberlin. Now all of them, representatives of a united people, have become allies. This can be seen in the image of Sultan Valiy, who was the father of the young Abulmansur, and the unknown to the people, the rootless batyr Elchibek. In the novel’s narrative, they defended Turkestan together from the Dzungars (Mukhtarova, 2021). The people united against one large and dangerous enemy. And this enemy now intends to destroy it, literally wipe it off the face of the earth. This demonstrates the transition from an ‘I-experience’ to a ‘we-experience,’ as theorized by Vološinov (1986, p. 88). The shift reflects how individual concerns are subsumed by collective identity, as the people unite against a common enemy. No longer divided by clan or tribe, the characters represent a broader, unified struggle, where the ‘we’ takes precedence over individual narratives, illustrating the community’s strength in solidarity.

It was through the difficulties that the Kazakh people were destined to face that they realised the importance of unity and were able to turn away from enmity and disputes

among themselves. According to the Jungian school of psychology, for an individual to develop qualitatively, he or she must go through a great deal of pain (Spytska, 2023). Only when one is left almost destroyed to the ground like a huge stone building does one begin to understand the importance of things and events that are fundamental to one's identity. The same thing happened to the people in I. Yessenberlin's novel *The Nomads: Despair*. Looking at the image of the people in the novel, it is evident that the people understand the inevitable change in their position in relation to the authorities, represented by the Genghizides, Hakims, local beys and aksakals. This is what led to the overall popular strategy, which was reinforced by the successful insertion by the author of the folk song "Elim-ai," which in a certain way breaks down the mindset of the people (Ospanova, 2019).

Thus, the war with the Dzungars was an experience for the Kazakhs that destroyed the old vision of the world, but gave them an entirely new one. The nomads were transformed from an insignificant community on a global scale into a Kazakh nation. From a wide boundless land, the "steppe" turned into a single state called the "Kazakh Khanate." These changes were described in the first two volumes, and by the end of the second book of the trilogy there is talk of a unified Kazakh Khanate, as the first novel is all about the decline of the Genghizides power, the end of the Mongol Empire, and the dawn of Kazakh statehood. The nomads have now become a people who understand that they must defend their homeland or else they might disappear as a nation. The description of the bloody battles in the text of the novel gives an insight into how violent the methods of destroying the nation were. The battle that took place between the Dzungars and the Kazakhs was pivotal for the free people precisely because of its scale. Dzungar Khongtaiji has chosen the right time for his invasion for the greatest chance of victory – spring. He understood at this time Kazakh herders were castrating two-year-old horses, and half of the herds were unable to travel long distances for a fortnight. It was also difficult for sheep flocks with newborn calves to move around at that time. Moreover, numerous steppe rivers rise during floods in spring, which may not serve as a serious obstacle for combat cavalry, but hinder the movement of peaceful herds (Ospanova, 2019). The war could only be won by taking all these little things into account.

Thus, based on a study of the key points of I. Yessenberlin's novel *The Nomads: Despair*, it can be concluded that only a nomad could conquer a nomad, knowing the

details of their life and economic management, an excellent strategy for an attack can be developed. In the face of such a sad historical experience, nomads were retained as part of the Kazakh khanate. The author described various philosophical questions posed by people entering the nomadic nation (Grader, 2019). All of them pondered how they came to such an outcome and why the allies could not save them. Power and war are inherent concepts in history and the Kazakh people have been able to draw the conclusion for themselves that independence and responsibility are necessary. After this realisation, the mentality of the people, described over the course of five hundred years during the plot of the trilogy, changes, which is why the psychological ethnopsychological aspect is so important.

Discussion

The issue of the people, their traditions and culture has always been one of the most challenging for research and academic papers because of its specificity. Despite the abundance of historical information for substantial bodies of academic research and the novels that derive from them, it is always difficult to portray the identity of a nation's representatives and its characteristics through identity. I. Yessenberlin, in his novel-chronicle *The Nomads: Despair*, was able to combine both the detached human personality and the community of the Kazakh people, presenting the reader with a highly interesting project for discussion. Many colleagues and scholars from other fields have been able to contribute to discussions of the concept of people in I. Yessenberlin's (1978) novel *The Nomads: Despair*.

For example, O.S. Aketina (2019), who researched conceptual analysis of the fiction text in her academic paper, noted that many novels devoted to historical events and eras conceal much more than just a rich cultural heritage. According to the scholar, historical novels, and novels-chronicles, mostly include in their texts a huge variety of details that are not always obvious to the reader. They can suggest philosophical, psychological, socio-cultural and many other themes. This feature makes novels a good base for literary reviews and a great idea for films. Therefore, when the reader is presented with a voluminous text with the history of a particular people or country, it is important to understand how to use methods to analyse the work. Thus, paying close attention to

each character and distinguishing them as individuals helps to come to the realisation of why literally every character is valuable, whether they are major or minor. In *The Nomads: Despair*, for instance, the importance of personalities is highlighted in lines such as: “In the steppe, akyns were allowed to mock the weaknesses and vices of all people, regardless of their lineage or wealth, and true akyns fully exercised this right” (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 96).

In this regard, A.B. Tumanova’s (2019) study in which the researcher takes an in-depth look at the importance of time frames and chronotope in the work can be considered particularly important. According to the scholar, it is the time frame analysis and the era features that epitomise the face of the people. Usually, each repetition or fixation by the author on a particular clothing item or key word reflects an epochal change or on the contrary a conservatism and traditionalism. Since I. Yessenberlin’s work covers a very long period of five hundred years, it is worth suggesting the extent of the changes in the world view of all people. The changes are described in detail in the work and smoothly reflect the way the people have developed over a long period of time and how hard it is for them to do so. As the reader can see, this struggle is expressed through lines like: “We will disappear unless we learn to build and plant... But another life is already squeezing us from all sides” (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 98). This highlights the tension between tradition and the pressures of modernization, showing how hard it is for the nomads to adapt to the new world while maintaining their identity. This story reflects how much people need to learn throughout their lives and how important it is to keep up with the rapid passage of time. It is in this novel-chronicle that one can see how traditions, important to all elders, are receding into the background, they no longer remain as relevant as they were just a couple of decades ago. People must find and invent new ways of surviving and arranging their lives, and it is through this that they realise the power of their unity and acceptance of the necessary rifts within their lives.

A. B. Tumanova (2019) draws a parallel with modernity, where time is running faster than ever before. Whereas in the author’s novel, people could think about which course they would prefer, today’s representatives must make choices here and now, regardless of unpreparedness. History determines future, which is why countries, parties and individual movements still exist (Lewinski, 2015). For the same reason, the idea of a world parliament cannot be realised. People need to feel safe around compatriots,

relatives, and friends. They should also be part of society, as socialisation is one of the most natural and basic human needs. People's communities and ethnic associations will always be a constant in this world, as there will always be those who, for one reason or another, adhere to different goals and are ready to go against the balance (Ordaeva et al., 2019). The problem of the time is the lack of personalities who are willing to break the routine of life in the name of ambiguous goals. People need certainty, but as historical injustice demonstrates – nothing can be clear all at once and never remains so until the end (Bocheliuk et al., 2020). In I. Yessenberlin's novel there were such people; it was they who defended their nation at the cost not only of their habitual lives, but also of principles, love, faith, and all sorts of convictions. The legends mention the so-called call of the blood, and it was this that led all the heroes to the end. As a rule, history is a cyclical process (Al-Eriani, 2021). Just as wars are inevitable, so are periods of peace, but it is important to understand the significance of personal costs in this sphere.

The role of personality is reflected in the study by M. Abramova (2020), where she reflects on the likelihood of such a relative category as happiness in a person's life and on the qualities and characteristics of personality that affect it. In the context of this study, the concept of a peaceful future is conditioned by the categorisation of personality according to Jungian theory, which lies in the fact that a person can only become truly strong and fulfilled after experiencing profound catastrophes at some point in his or her life. Such a principle certainly does not fit into classical legends, but the realistic novel-chronicle incorporates the more brutal and truthful realities of historical catharsis, which makes the Jungian theory highly relevant. According to the principles of this theory, a person must overcome numerous challenges on their path, and the more obstacles and seemingly unsolvable tasks they face, the more conscious their human nature becomes, leading to better decision-making. This is echoed in the novel, where it is said: "No matter how much land you conquer, if you do not, please the people, your khanate will resemble a dwarf coat stretched over a giant. At the slightest clumsy movement, it will tear at every seam..." (Yessenberlin, 1978, p. 94).

Jung's followers do not discuss the probable number of such difficulties, but as a rule, heroic individuals always live-in struggle with the external world (Kongyratbay 2021; 2023). Therefore, a people who live happily and do not obey anyone can never be truly happy. All the people who were in the warmth of their home, had a family, were

free in body and soul and did not experience greater tragedies than the loss of a horse could never become a strong and great nation in the broadest sense of the word. Those catastrophic moments described by the author in the pages of the books in the form of violent killings, abuse and humiliation constitute an enabling environment for development. As the novel *The Nomads* can trace the stages of the history of the Kazakh people through many, full of changes over the centuries, the change in the views of the generations becomes also apparent. The people one can see at the end of the third volume are incredibly strong and brave Kazakhs, but they also have intelligence, caution and objective thinking that helps them to survive. Rage and flashy decisions are replaced by the judiciousness necessary for wise individuals. The author therefore suggests looking at the horrific wars not just as a huge blot on a nation's history, but as a period that divided people's lives into before and after, making them far more complicated, but also more majestic.

S. S. Mukhtarova (2021) studies the events of the novel in the context of family unity and the complexities of this aspect. The scholar believes that the theme of family runs through all the events of the novel, even if it is not immediately obvious. It is the family and its preservation that becomes the important factor that pushed all the men to come together and seek all kinds of help. At the beginning of the first volume in the novel, all representatives of the nomadic population are portrayed as proud and unwavering people who would never cede a corner of their land to invaders. By the end of the second volume, men begin to make decisions, putting aside all preconceptions and relying entirely on logic and the need to preserve family, heritage. Those brothers who were divided by disputes and quarrels went into battle together, and their wives did their best to make sure they had something to fight for. The concept of the people in this situation is the family, as the nomads were united by their reasoning and free spirit. After realising the criticality of the situation, the primary goal of every adult, no matter male or female, became the preservation of offspring. Children were the hope of the nomads, as they could continue the family line and then no one would wipe them out completely (Khamzina et al., 2020). Sacrifice and wisdom became the characteristics not only of women, but also of men. That is why, according to the scholar, nomads became part of the Kazakh Khanate and managed to survive unlike many other peoples exterminated forever.

The importance of folklore and nomads' historical features is highlighted in the study by A. M. Ospanova (2019) who argues that various references to the folklore of the Kazakh peoples help to understand the differences between other cultures and peoples and to realise the importance of traditions in this context (Mizamkhan, 2021). The Kazakh-Dzungar battle, described in the second part of the novel, has long been the heritage of both the Kazakh people and many other multinational countries. As the book itself is based on legends describing a variety of traditions and heroic deeds, an atmosphere of bravery and a slightly romanticised attitude towards war is present when reading the books superficially. This is not because of the need to tone down violent events, but to reflect the Kazakh folklore which is so meaningful to so many people. The abundance of stories, on which many generations of Kazakh children grew up, is what holds the key to understanding tragic history (Abdraim et al., 2013). There have been many wars, but it is the battle presented that reflects the culture and cannot be compared to any other war. Abylai Khan is not at the forefront, even with the leading role assigned to him. I. Yessenberlin managed to show a variety of characters, even weaving traditional Kazakh songs into his novel-chronicle, which reflected the unity and traditionalism of Kazakh society. This approach has become the best in the literary genre and has helped to show other countries the importance of discussing the culture and history of different peoples (Mashakova, 2021). Through an extensive discussion of the people concept in the novel *The Nomads: Despair* by I. Yessenberlin, various informative analogies could be drawn and both the traditionalism and the variability of Kazakh culture over a complex historical period could be traced.

Conclusions

Thus, it can be stated that the concept of people in the novel-chronicle by the Kazakh writer and historian I. Yessenberlin *The Nomads: Despair* has been considered as extensively and comprehensively as possible. In the second novel of the trilogy, the Kazakh nation is presented not just as an isolated state, but as a living and changing organism. In the beginning, the commonality of the people is an unformed system of values, which is based solely on the customary way of life, traditions, and superstitions. They do not yet understand how to proceed and do not realise their own ways of dealing

with severe crises. As the storyline develops, the transformation of nation-building and the change in their priorities becomes clear. I. Yessenberlin showed several planes at once, which influenced the reader's perception of the people. The first plane is the historical component, which is reflected through a bloody war.

The part presented is accepted as inevitable and it is this fatal unrighteousness that began to change people's consciousness dramatically and irrevocably. The second is the mental development of the characters, which is shown through psychological models. The hardships experienced by the Kazakh people were often too cruel and unbearable to overcome, but the characters coped with each obstacle and became stronger. The legendary Kazakh personality was formed through the ability to stick at nothing. Kazakh folklore, which has become the basis for the whole story, also plays an important role. Every battle was described with the help of tales and songs, and the heroes were not fictional, but borrowed from legends. Due to such diversity, I. Yessenberlin was able to create unique literary works admired by the whole world. The three books have been made into films in various countries, press conferences have been organised and scholarly debates on the author's works have become possible. An audience of readers from Kazakhstan was surprised by the truthfulness and versatility that this literary work. That is why the concept of the people was embodied as competently and in detail as possible by the writer, without unnecessary embellishment, but with sincere dignity and respect for the Kazakh people.

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